LESSON 11

In this lesson we learn more about the nominal sentence.

As you already know the nominal sentence consists of the *mubtada'* and the *khabar*. The *mubtada'* is the noun about which you want to say something, and the *khabar* is what to have to say about it, e.g., الْقَمَرُ جَمِيلٌ. In this sentence you want to speak about the moon (الْقَمَرُ), so it is the *mubtada'*. And the information you give about it is that it is 'beautiful' (جَمِيلٌ), so that is the *khabar*.

Both the *mubtada'* and the *khabar* are *marfû'* (al-qamar-**u** jamîl-**u**-n).

About the mubtada'

Types of the *mubtada'* :

The *mubtada'* may be :

a) a noun or a pronoun, e.g., اللّٰهُ رَبُّنا 'Allah is our lord.'-- القِراءةُ مُفيدةٌ 'Reading is useful.' -- الجُلُوسُ هُنا مَمْنُوعٌ 'Sitting here is prohibited.' -- نَحنُ طُلاّبٌ 'We are students.'

b) a *masdar mu'awwal*, e.g., وأنْ تَصُومُوا خَيرٌ لَكُمْ[1] 'And that you fast is better for you.' -- وأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى[2] 'And that you should forgive is nearer to piety.'

The *mubtada'* is normally definite as in the following examples :

مُحَمَّدٌ صلى الله عليه وسلم رَسُولُ اللهِ 'Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is the messenger of Allah.' (مُحَمَّدٌ is definite because it is a prpoer noun العَلَمُ).

أنا مدرِّسٌ 'I am a teacher.' (أنا is definite because it is a pronoun).

هذا مسجدٌ 'This is a mosque.' (هذا is definite because it is demontrative pronoun اسمُ الإشارة).

1- Al-Qur'an 2:184.

2- Al-Qur'an 2:237

الَّذي يعبدُ غَيْرَ اللهِ مُشْرِكٌ 'He who worships other than Allah is a *mushrik.*' (الذي is definite because it is a relative pronoun الاسم الموصُول).

القُرآنُ كتـــابُ اللهِ 'The Qur'an is the book of Allah.' (القُرآن is definite as it has the definite atricle **al-**).

مفْتاحُ الْجَنَّةِ الصَّلاةُ 'The key to Paradise is *s̲alah.*' (مفْتاحُ is definite as its *mud̲âf ilaihi* is definite).

The *mubtada'* may be indefinite in the following circumstances :

a) If the *khabar* is a *shibhu jumlah* (شِبْهُ جُمْلَةٍ)[1] which is one of the following two things :

- a prepositional phrase like : في البيت، على المَكْتب، كَالْمَاء.
- a *z̲arf* (الظَّرْفُ) like : اليَوْمَ، غَداً، تَحْتَ، فَوقَ، عندَ[2].

In this case the *khabar* **should** precede the *mubtada'*, e.g.,

في الغُرفة رَجُـــلٌ 'There is a man in the room.' (رَجُلٌ في الغُرفة is not a sentence). Here the indefinite noun رَجُلٌ is the *mubtada'*, and the phrace في الغرفة is the *khabar*.

Here is another example : لي أخٌ 'I have a brother' (literally, 'there is brother for me'). Here the indefinite noun أخٌ is the *mubtada'*.

تَحْتَ المكتب ســـاعةٌ 'There is watch under the table.' (ساعةٌ تحتَ المكتب is not a sentence). Here ساعةٌ is the *mubtada'*, and the *z̲arf* تَحْتَ is the *khabar*.

1- The expression *shibhu jumlah* literally means 'that which resembles a sentence.'

2- Words like تَحْـتَ 'under', فَـوْقَ 'above', عِنْـدَ 'with' are not prepositions in Arabic. Prepositions like في، عَلَى، إلَى، مِنْ، بِـــــ ، كَـــ are particles, but words like تحتَ، فوقَ، عندَ are nouns which are declinable (i.e., change their endings), e.g., هذا مِنْ عِنْدِ الله، مِنْ فوقِــه، مِنْ تحْتِـــه. And a *majrûr* noun following one of these words is a *mudhaf ilaihi*, eg. تَحْتَ الْمَاءِ 'under the water.'

Here is another example : عندَنا سيَّارةٌ 'We have a car' (literally, 'There is car with us').

b) If the *mubtada'* is an interrogative noun like مَنْ 'who', مَا 'what', كَمْ 'how many.' These nouns are indefinite. E.g.,

ما بكَ؟ 'What is wrong with you?' (Here ما is the *mubtada'*, and the prepositional phrase بكَ is the *khabar*).

مَنْ مريضٌ؟ 'Who is sick?' (Here مَنْ is the *mubtada'*, and مريضٌ is the *khabar*).

كَمْ طالباً في الفصلِ؟ 'How many students are there in the class?' (Here كَمْ is the *mubtada'*, and the prepositional phrase في الفصْلِ is the *khabar*).

There are many more situations where the *mubtada'* can be indefinite, and you will learn them later إنْ شاء الله.

The order of the *mubtada'* and the *khabar* :

Normally the *mubtada'* precedes the *khabar*, e.g., أنتَ مدرِّسٌ, but this order may also be reversed, e.g., أمدرِّسٌ أنتَ؟ 'Are you a teacher?', عجيبٌ هذا 'This is strange' for هذا عجيبٌ.

But the *mubtada'* **should** predede the *khabar* if it is an interrogative noun, e.g., ما بكَ؟ – مَنْ مريضٌ؟.

And the *khabar* **should** predede the *mubtada'* if

a) it is an interrogative noun, e.g., ما اسمُكَ؟. Here اسمُ is the *mubtada'*, and ما is the *khabar*.

b) it is a *shibhu jumlah*, and the *mubtada'* is indefinite, e.g., في المسجدِ رجالٌ 'There some men in the mosque.' أمامَ البيتِ شَجَرَةٌ 'There is tree in front of the house.'

The omission of the *mubtada'* / the *khabar* :

The *mubtada'* or the *khabar* may be omitted, e.g., in reply to the question ما اسْمُكَ one may say حامِدٌ. This is the *khabar*, and the *mubtada'* has been omitted. The full sentence is اسمي حامدٌ.

Similarly, in asnwer to the question مَنْ يَعْرِفُ؟ 'Who knows?' one may say أنا. This is the *mubtada'*, and the *khabar* has been omitted. The full sentence is أنا أعْرِفُ 'I know.'

About the khabar

Types of the *khabar*

There are three types of *khabar* : *mufrad, jumlah* and *shibhu jumlah.*

a) The *mufrad* is a word (not a sentence), e.g., المُؤْمِنُ مِرْآةُ المُؤمِنِ 'The believer is the mirror of the believer [1] .'

b) The *jumlah* is a sentence. It may be a nominal or a verbal setence, e.g.,

- بلالٌ أبــــوهُ وزيـــرٌ 'Bilal's father is a minister.' Literally, 'Bilal, his father is a minister.' Here بلالٌ is the *mubtada'*, and the nominal sentence أبوهُ وزيرٌ is the *khabar*, and this sentence, in turn, is made up of the *mubtada'* (أبوهُ) and the *khabar* (وزيرٌ).

Here is another example :

المُديــــرُ مــــا اسْــــمُهُ؟ 'What is the name of the headmaster?' Literally, 'The headmaster, what is his name?' Here المديرُ is the *mubtada'* and the nominal sentence مـــا اسْمُـــهُ is the *khabar* wherein اسمُهُ is the *mubtada'*, and ما is the *khabar*.

-الطُلاّبُ دَخَلُـــــوا 'The students entered.' Here الطُلاّبُ is the *mubtada'* and the verbal sentence دَخَلُوا 'they entered' is the *khabar*.

Here is another example :

واللهُ خَلَقَكُــــمْ 'And Allah created you.' Here اللهُ is the *mubtada'* and the verbal sentence خَلَقَكُمْ 'He created you' is the *khabar*.

1- It means that a believer is like a mirror to another, i.e., just as a mirror shows a man the blemishes he may have on his face, a believer points out to his fellow-believer his defects that he may not perceive himself. This is a hadith reported by Abû Dâwûd, Kitâb al-Adab: 57.

c) The *shibhu jumlah*, as we have already seen, is either a prepositional phrase or a *zarf* :

- اَلحَمْــدُ لِلّــهِ 'Praise belongs to Allah.' Here الحمدُ is the *mubtada'* and the prepositional phrase لِلّــهِ (لِ + الله) is the *khabar*, and it is in the place of *raf '* (فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ).

- اَلجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ ظِلالِ السُّــيُوفِ 'Paradise is under the shadows of the swords[1].' Here اَلجَنَّــةُ is the *mubtada'* and the *zarf* تَحْتَ is the *khabar* . As a *zarf* it is *mansûb*, and as a *khabar* it is in the place of *raf'* (فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ).

Agreement between the *mubtada'* and *khabar* :

The *khabar* agrees with the *mubtada'* in number and gender, e.g.,

a) in number : المدرِّسُ واقفٌ، والطُّلاّبُ جالسونَ. بابا الفصْلِ مُغْلَقــانِ، ونافذَتــاهُ مفتوحتــانِ. We see here that if the *mubtada'* is singular, the *khabar* is also singular. If its dual or plural, the *khabar* is also dual or plural.

b) in gender : حامدٌ مُهَندِسٌ، وزَوْجتُهُ طَبيبةٌ، وابناهُما تاجِرانِ، وبِنْتاهُما مدرِّستانِ.

Here we see that if the *mubtada'* is masculine, the *khabar* is also masculine; and if it is feminine the *khabar* also is feminine.

The order of the *mubtada'* and *khabar*

سَبَبُ التَّقْدِيمِ/التأخيرِ The reason for being before the *khabar* or after it	مُقَدَّمٌ/مُؤَخَّرٌ Is it bebore the *khabar* or after it?	معرفةٌ/نكرةٌ definite or indefinite	المبتدأ *mubtada'*
This is the original order.	before the *kh*	definite	اللهُ غفورٌ.
This is optional	after the *kh*	definite	عَجِيبٌ كَلامُهُ.

1- This is taken from a hadîth The wording of the hadîth is وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الجَنَّةَ تَحتَ ظِلالِ السُّيُوفِ 'Know that Paradise is under the shadow of the swords.' It is reported by Bukhâri, Kitâb Jihâd, 22, 112

Because the *m* is indefinite and the *kh* is *shibhu jumlah*	the *m* should be after the *kh*	definite	عندَكَ سيّارةٌ.
Because the *m* is indefinite and the *kh* is *shibhu jumlah.*	the *m* should be after the *kh*	indefinite	أَ في الله شَكٌّ؟
Because the *m* is an interrogative noun.	the *m* shuold be before the *kh*	indefinite	مَنْ غائبٌ؟
Because the *kh* is an interrogative noun.	the *m* should be after the *kh*	definite	مَنْ أنتَ؟
This is the original order.	before the *kh*	definite because it means صيامُكُمْ	وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ.

✍Exercises

1) Use each of the following nouns in a sentence as *mubtada'*.

2) Use each of the following nouns in a sentence as *khabar*.

3) Use the word المُدَرِّس as *mubtada'* in five sentences, the *khabar* being a *mufrad* in the first, a *zarf* in the second, a prepositional phrase in the third, a verbal sentence in the fourth, and a nominal sentence in the fifth.

4) Give three sentences the *khabar* in each being a *zarf.*

5) Give three sentences the *khabar* in each being a prepositional phrase.

6) Use each of the following nouns in a sentence as *mubtada'* its *khabar* being a nominal sentence. Make the noun given in brackets the *mubtada'* of this nominal sentence.

7) Point out all the nominal sentences occurring in the main lesson in each of which the *mubtada'* has been omitted.

8) Point out all the nominal sentences occurring in the main lesson, and specify the type of *khabar* in each of them.